

OTF

Master Metals exec facing criminal charges

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CLEVELAND

Douglas Mickey, president of Master Metals Inc., faces criminal charges of making false statements to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, according to an information filed in U.S. District Court in Cleveland yesterday.

Phillip S. Howard, a Macedonia consultant who contracted with Master Metals to give advice on health and safety matters, also is alleged to have given false statements to OSHA, the information said.

The company, which recovers lead from scrap and other products and sells it, was shut down in August by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency for high lead dust levels.

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In approximately 24 instances, the information says, employees who had been said to have refused blood tests had in fact submitted to blood tests while six employees, said to be on vacation, had also had blood tests.

If convicted, Mickey faces maximum po-

tential penalties of five years' imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

The U.S. attorney's office made clear that an information is only a charge and not evidence of guilt. The case is being prosecuted by Ann C. Rowland and Michael Ann Johnson, assistant U.S. attorneys, after investigation by the FBI and OSHA.

Mickey's lawyer, Patrick M. McLaughlin, said he had no comment on the charges and added, "Mr. Mickey and Master Metals have cooperated with the government during its

investigation and will continue to do so."

Howard could not be reached for comment. The consultant was charged with making false statements to the effect that Master Metals employees had certain blood-lead levels, or had refused testing, when he knew blood-lead levels were higher than represented.

Howard faces maximum potential penalties of six months imprisonment and a \$5,000 fine.

Master Metals was allowed partial resumption last month in the agreement that required the company to address many problems concerning air quality and hazardous waste. It also required the company to complete the cleanup of a home on Holmden Ave., where hazardous fill was placed.

Separately, the company reached an agreement with the city of Cleveland on an air-pollution case.

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